



## And now the teachers

By our correspondent

Negotiators for union teachers and local school officials are go-

### SAN FRANCISCO SCHOOLS THREATENED IN DISPUTE OVER EVERYTHING BUT PAY

ing to the mat this week in 11th hour sessions to try to avert a scheduled Friday morning strike against San Francisco schools.

The dispute, strangely, involves almost everything but wages.

Monday night the union broke off talks with Superintendent Robert E. Jenkins, but is meeting with school board members. If these talks fail, about one-third of the city's teachers will picket 135 schools.

The San Francisco Federation of Teachers Local 61, claiming some 1,400 members, wants direct discussion of 92 issues that include:

- Who teaches what — the union claims too many teachers are assigned to teach subjects for which they hold neither college majors nor minors.
- Hiring more teacher aides.
- Revamping school supply procedures.
- Lowering the size of classes, especially in areas with students of "low achievement."
- Complete racial integration of schools once they are upgraded.

The last minute meetings with Jenkins proved fruitless. Union leaders protested that the superintendent had no intention to do anything but "speechify."

Although the S.F. local 61 is recommending that Jenkins order all schools to close, he has stated that the law requires him to keep the schools open.

The larger San Francisco Classroom Teachers Association has advised its members to ignore the strike.

Union leaders, however, expect to get cooperation from other organized employees such as cafeteria workers, office clerks, janitors and teamsters.

Strike sanction was being sought early this week from the San Francisco Labor Council.

"We feel absolutely certain we can close down the schools," James Ballard, president of the Teachers local, told The Guardian. "Numbers really do not mean much in a strike of this kind. This has been proved elsewhere."

Ballard said that parents would have to use their own judgment as to whether to send children through picket lines. He cannot by law ask parents to keep their children at home, but he's banking on the fact that San Francisco is

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a strong union town and many parents will refuse to let their children cross picket lines.

Union members were scheduled to take a final strike vote Thursday afternoon in an emergency meeting at the Veterans Auditorium — a vote which Ballard predicts would overwhelmingly favor the strike.

A heavy turnout, at a November

meeting, voted almost unanimously to initiate strike action in January.

#### THE LONG LIST

The union had presented Jenkins with a long list of improvements it said were needed immediately. It demanded direct negotiations with the superintendent.

These included such basic changes as requiring junior and senior teachers to teach only in their specialties and to teach not more than three full hours without a break. More: the union wanted enough school aides so that

teachers would not be forced to pull hall and latrine patrol duties.

The number of students in each class is a major item. The union wants this item tied into pupil achievement — a move that makes sense but would cost money.

Teaching in particular majors is a sore point in minority schools. It is charged that substitutes and gym majors often teach academic subjects in which they are not qualified.

The union demanded direct talks with Jenkins. He hedged.

— continued on page 2

### As newspaper talks resume --pressures are rising



By our labor correspondent

The economic war between San Francisco's daily newspaper publishers and its newspaper unions goes on, and where and when it will end still nobody knows. For more than two weeks now, they have fought without retreating noticeably from positions they held when the battle opened.

But, this week, they at last have begun what appear to be serious negotiations — the first since long before the actual start of the Mailers Union strike that brought out all 2,900 of the newspapers' employees and closed The Chronicle and The Examiner on Jan. 5.

What's going on in those bargaining sessions is important. But just as important has been the maneuvering that precedes the talks and which eventually will determine when and how the dispute will be settled.

Publishers and union representatives met briefly on Jan. 10, but it was clear they weren't yet interested in real bargaining. With the strike finally underway, neither side was eager to begin serious negotiations until it could gauge the strength of its opponent accurately and line up as much support as possible.

Both went to the public immediately for some of the muscle they hoped to bring to the bargaining table when it came time for meaningful talk.

#### HALF-HEARTED

With the publishers, however, it seemed only a half-hearted attempt. True to the practice of newspaper owners everywhere, they were reluctant to communicate with the public, even at a time of such personal and corporate crisis. Interviewers often were sent away with a brusque "No comment."

Union charges, broadcast widely, generally went unanswered by the publishers, and they made

very few unsolicited charges of their own.

When they did talk, publisher spokesmen tried to play games with the fact that the strike was not against the newspaper as such, but against their corporate umbrella, the San Francisco Newspaper Printing Company. The papers own the company, of course, but spokesmen insisted strikers

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### GOOD GRIEF!

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THE AIR HIGH OVER THE LINES..  
"PICKET" LINES, THAT IS!



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Even Snoopy entered the strike battle with a cartoon drawn specially by Charles Schulz, Peanuts creator, for a union strike poster. Says the caption: "All of us World War I flying aces who work for the newspapers aren't working right now because the Red Barons who publish the papers have been trying to shoot us down."



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# News Talks Resume...

—continued from page 1

had no grievances against the papers themselves.

Another of the publishers' chief arguments sounded as strange.

The standard answer to the standard question asked struck employers — "when will the strike end?" — commonly is a simple, "When the union agrees to our reasonable contract terms."

But the answer of the newspapers' spokesmen was, instead, that the strike would end, as Examiner publisher Charles Gould told reporters, "as soon as the unions order their members back to work."

That related to the publishers' major pre-negotiation effort. It was not to woo the public, but to try to split the unity among the Mailers and the 11 other newspaper unions which have honored and augmented the picket lines and otherwise supported the strike.

"The other unions," Gould would say, "have no quarrel with us."

Without the other unions' support, the strike by the 150-member Mailers Union could be crushed easily. But other unions did not break ranks.

The unions remained convinced that the publishers' attempts to

weaken the Mailers Union foreshadowed attempts to weaken all of them — attempts that would be successful if they didn't rally behind the mailers.

Some reporters in the largest union involved, the Newspaper Guild, complained about supporting their blue-collar brethren in what they felt was a fight for more money and easier working conditions by semi-skilled workers.

## INTELLECTUAL UNEASE

But their intellectual unease had relatively little effect. For there were others within Guild ranks who felt that, though a 1930s-style fight to protect union rights wasn't as intellectually attractive these days as more recent movements for social justice, it still was a matter of basic social justice.

Nor did they feel, as did some complaints, that there was relevance to the fact that the labor movement generally did or did not support the war in Vietnam or did or did not discriminate against racial minorities. (See "The Strikers who are torn by doubts" — last week's Guardian.)

Many Guild intellectuals apparently saw it, in short, as most blue-collar workers saw it: As a fight by San Francisco news-

paper workers to retain a strong voice in the setting of their wages and working conditions.

The unions put together, in fact, one of the most tightly unified strike organizations in recent San Francisco history. They fought off an attempt by the newspapers to get a court order shortly limiting their picket lines, on grounds that the lines were "unruly."

(The publishers hired a private detective to watch the pickets at the main entrance to the Chronicle Building at Fifth and Mission Sts. from a window high in the nearby Pickwick Hotel. He took movies but, when the publishers' attorneys showed them to Superior Court Judge Edward O'Day, he flatly announced they had shown him "no signs of disorder.")

Meanwhile, unions tried some unity-splitting of their own. They had no success, however, in attempts to get the other, non-striking, local newspaper publishers, at the Oakland Tribune and San Jose Mercury-News, to negotiate with the mailers separately. Nor were they successful in attempts to bring newspaper publishers personally to the bargaining table, in place of hard-nosed Printing Company representatives handling newspapers' negotiations.

The unions' major tactic, however, has been an all-out pitch for public support. Their spokesmen have been on radio and television as often as stations allow them and the city is flooded with their leaflets.

## "SLIPPERY WHEN WET"

Herb Caen has told the public why he supports the strike. Snoopy has complained that "the Red Barons who publish the papers have been trying to shoot us down" and cartoonist Bob Bastian drew a two-headed monster: "I am the dread, two-headed, man-eating Printco monster (and I am terrible to behold!)" It is also, says a sign, "Slippery When Wet."

Food and money has flowed into strike headquarters from some of the newspapers' most prominent advertisers, and former Mayor John F. Shelley and other political, business and labor leaders have walked the picket lines.

Unions appeared eager to move into negotiations again. But though the publishers may have wanted to put it off longer — in hopes that they would weaken the unions by attrition, if nothing else — pressures had grown strong.

## STRONG PRESSURES

So strong did they grow that key officials of the powerful national organizations whose agreement is essential to any settlement finally have been brought into the union-publisher discussions. They're from the Hearst Corporation, half-owner of the Printing Company, and the International Typographical Union, parent organization of the Mailers Union.

The public may resent union actions, but it is neither being solicited by the publishers for support nor is it rushing to the publisher's defense on its own.

Too, the publishers' business friends, Mayor Joseph Alioto and others have stepped up their demands for settlement. Both publishers and the unions know that an open call for arbitration, or at least outside mediation by a powerful figure like Alioto, will limit their bargaining area. They want to move while they can still control the situation alone.

The publishers and the unions nevertheless may jockey still more for better bargaining positions, and current negotiations could get little further than those of the past. But they are talking with each other rather than just at each other, and that's the first step that must be taken if San Francisco's daily newspapers are to

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From our picket line correspondent

Strike, picket line, imported scabs, unity committee... somehow we get the picture of Pete Seeger and 20 million miners holding hands and singing "Solidarity Forever" as snarling Pinkertons, billy clubs upraised, crashed into the lines which bend but did not break, and once again the sweat of honest toil will be rewarded by fair wages, improved working conditions and decent hours... The Holy War of Samuel Gompers.

And here is the reality: picket duty at 3 a.m., when the line, which moves so nicely in the day time, breaks down completely. Men stand in doorways, leaning on their picket signs and talking; or sitting around the fires built (wood donated) in oil cans at either end of the Minna St. tunnel.

Guildsmen and pressmen and mailers stare into the fire, waiting for the hardier souls of the dawn patrol to start the line circling again, when there will be somebody to see them besides winos and cops. All share the small hours fire with strikers and, by tacit agreement, pretend not to notice one another. Pinkertons, on guard inside, nod sleepily over their gin rummy game.

#### WISHY-WASHY ANARCHISTS

The idea of newspaper men on strike is peculiar, anyway. They are congenitally, even pathologically, afraid of Organizations. They are members of the Guild for the same reason that water runs downhill. In general, they hold as an article of faith that mass movements are conceived by idiots and run by knaves, that governments and corporations and principalities and powers are organized for the exploitation of their members. Wishy-washy anarchism prevails as an ethos.

Thus, journalists approached strike duties much like a scottie approaching a turtle. Everybody carefully avoided reacting publicly, unsure what the cool thing would be. The atmosphere at Strike Headquarters (in spite of the scary signs, "These Men Are Scabs," over acres and acres of snapshots of young non-descript men in T-shirts and pinch-faced women) was low-key and humorous, everybody Making The Best of It.

#### HEARST AS VILLAIN

It was partly a matter of not knowing whom to be angry at. Initial reactions carried strong anti-mailer sentiment, but when facts came out (journalists were, as usual, blissfully unaware of what was happening in their own plant), it became clear that the villain

# Here is the reality

was management; more specifically, that the villain was Hearst, with his imported strikebreakers in Los Angeles and his traditionally peculiar labor policies.

That, of course, made things easier. Hating William Randolph Hearst is like falling into bed — absurdly easy, lots of fun.

So most everybody pitched in. Bea Mettastick, Chronicle payroll lady who had just the month before pleaded with friends not to reelect her as a guild delegate, worked 10 hour days. Carl Nolte, unit chairman whose pre-strike communiques and bulletin board debates with copydesk malcontents had been tinged with cynicism and a leisurely pessimism, started issuing the approved exhortive, avuncular statements and generally being a Union Leader.

Even better for morale was the performance of the prestige people. Herb Caen, Art Hoppe, Dwight Newton and Ralph Gleason, among others, religiously walked their picket duty.

"My respect for Caen has gone up 200 per cent," said a lady librarian on his shift. "He puts in the whole four hours, and he doesn't take longer breaks than anyone else."

Even though all guild brothers are equal, some are more equal than others. Nobody whose face or presence would have swayed significant blocks of sentiment were put on night-time hours or in odd locations. (Every building belonging to the San Francisco Newspaper Printing Company was picketed, including an obscure warehouse at 1st and Brannan Sts. manned by six lonely men). Nobody minded — what the hell, putting Caen and Hoppe anywhere else at any other time would have been a waste of natural resources.

What made all this esprit de corps so unusual was that the strike really did hurt. It wasn't even the guild's beef, yet 3/4's

of the membership did regular assigned duty on the line or at headquarters. It wasn't so much the guild's feeling for their brothers the mailers (the mailers were, in fact, asking for a starting salary which a guildsmen would not make without three years experience) as peer group pressure and the feeling that as long as they were in this thing, they might as well be In This Thing.

#### MEAGER STRIKE PAY

But it hurt. An editor with 25 years experience and a promising executive future walked his three hour duty every other day and signed up at the employment office for "anything except manual labor." A feature writer came off sick leave and walked the early morning shift in the pouring rain, then promptly went back on sick leave. Other editors and reporters tried to support their families on a meager \$45 a week benefits. Printers, by contrast, got \$101 a week strike benefits — minimum.

Yet a cheerful attitude prevailed. Mostly, people sat around swapping rumors or making them up — Alioto had flown down to see Yorty... Yorty had flown up to see Alioto — management was going to keep the strike going until April... until May... until Christmas... Charles Theriot was off hunting... Scott Newhall was on Our Side... Scott Newhall was on Their Side... mailers were striking the Tribune and the Mercury-News tomorrow... mailers were never going to strike the Tribune and Mercury-News... Knowland had everybody in his pocket... Knowland had nobody in his pocket...

#### MERGERS AS VILLAINS

The devil theory of Hearst helped, as did peer group pressure, but more important, at least to many guild members, was the 1965 merger.

A Chronicle reporter: "I wasn't really gung ho, you know, but Christ, after that merger I realized that they weren't concerned with good journalism or good ethics or good anything. They screwed us, and they screwed journalism in this town, and it's a pleasure to screw them back. Even a little."

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